

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 56

BY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

STATING THE FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE, ENCOURAGING HEALTHY, LOCALLY GROWN FOOD PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION IN THE STATE OF IDAHO, SUPPORT OF LOCAL FARMING, THE CONSUMPTION OF LOCALLY GROWN FOODS AND THE PROMOTION OF GREATER FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITHIN THE STATE, AND FURTHER ENCOURAGING IDAHOANS AND IDAHO BUSINESSES TO CELEBRATE AND GET TO KNOW THEIR LOCAL GROWERS AND TO PURCHASE AND CONSUME MORE FOOD PRODUCED IN OR NEAR IDAHO.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

WHEREAS, the State of Idaho recognizes the industriousness of Idaho farmers and ranchers throughout Idaho's history who have been and continue to be of major importance to the state's economy; and

WHEREAS, with Idaho's climate, soil and water, farmers and ranchers have created an agriculture that is famous around the world and Idaho-raised vegetables, fruits, grains, meats, dairy and eggs have an outstanding reputation for quality and flavor; and

WHEREAS, in the years preceding 1960, Idaho farmers grew a large percentage of the food eaten in the state. There has, however, been a gradual shift away from eating locally grown foods. Today a majority of the food eaten by Idahoans is not from Idaho. It is prudent to seek a better balance, recognizing the importance of the agricultural products that are exported outside of the state, which help the farming community and support jobs. However, it is also important to recognize that part of the balance is the increasing trend of Idaho farms to produce food for local consumption. This is a return toward greater food self-sufficiency which creates and expands local markets, consumption, consumer choice and jobs; and

WHEREAS, locally produced food makes farming more economically viable, keeps farmers in business, provides new agricultural opportunities, promotes stewardship of resources and saves valuable farmland from development. When a farmer is producing food that will not travel a long distance, a shorter shelf life allows the farmer to experiment and diversify, making farming more profitable and providing consumers with more choices; and

WHEREAS, populations whose diets are high in fruits and vegetables experience better health, with lower rates of obesity and related chronic conditions. The ability to grow, sell and easily obtain a consistent, adequate supply of fresh, local food can increase food security and empower families and communities to be more healthy and self-sufficient; and

WHEREAS, states across the United States are increasingly focusing on providing healthy, locally grown food supplies for their residents by developing local food policies that encourage investment in local food-related jobs and infrastructure, community gardens, as well as better relationships with farmers in their region. The growing local food interest has increased demand among Idaho residents for healthy, locally grown foods and

1 strengthened interest in developing partnerships between urban consumers
2 and regional growers; and

3 WHEREAS, small business is the backbone of Idaho's economy and local
4 food production can help promote entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency in
5 Idaho's small towns, revitalizing regional small farms, creating local
6 jobs, business opportunities and the recirculation of capital within Idaho.
7 Idaho has already undertaken beginning steps to increase the amount of
8 locally grown food available to Idaho consumers through the Idaho Department
9 of Agriculture's Idaho Preferred™ program and the University of Idaho
10 Extension Service has undertaken steps to encourage family food production
11 through such programs as Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers, Master
12 Composters and Victory Garden.

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the Second Regular
14 Session of the Sixtieth Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives
15 and the Senate concurring therein, that in order to promote the economic
16 vitality and public health and safety of Idaho communities, provide incen-
17 tives for job creation, attract economic investment, increase state per
18 capita income, support the future of agriculture and promote the health and
19 economic security of Idaho citizens and communities, it encourages healthy,
20 locally grown food production, distribution and consumption in the State of
21 Idaho.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it encourages the support of local farming
23 and the consumption of locally grown foods as a means for protecting our
24 region's agricultural land, topsoil, genetic diversity and the skills upon
25 which we all rely for our sustenance and survival.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it encourages the promotion of greater food
27 self-sufficiency within the state and the recognition that it is beneficial
28 to Idaho families, Idaho businesses, Idaho jobs and our state's economy to
29 increase this self-sufficiency. It also encourages all Idahoans and Idaho
30 businesses to celebrate and get to know their local growers and to purchase
31 and consume more food that is produced in or near Idaho and their own kitchen
32 pantries and dinner tables.